

Blair SB 374

Dear Members of the Committee,

The bill is very vague and leaves many questions open to interpretation, but above all, the "requirement", which is more than just a "recommendation", of all children to be evaluated for behavior problems by a physician multiple times is an overstepping of the government into the personal freedoms of parents and their children.

This bill is greatly flawed because it is too vague, which makes it subject to being abused. It does not specify where the children are to be assessed, such as in a school, at a physician's office, in a hospital, or in the home. Related to that is the big question of whether or not the parents have a say in the healthcare provider who performs the assessment. It would be a plus if parents had that choice, but as the bill stands, such a choice is not protected. Additionally, who is paying for these assessments? They have to cost something. It might be more prudent and cost-effective to allow parents, teachers, and other adults to recognize children with behavior problems and help those children in any way possible, including directing them to medical or state services, instead of having to pay for all of these behavioral assessments proposed by this bill. Both the government and a large part of the citizenry are strapped financially already.

Another important question left unanswered is what will the form consist of that goes from the healthcare provider to the state? Will it simply say that the child received an assessment, or will it label the child as "at risk", "possibly at risk", or "not at risk"? Will it go into any further level of detail? These are not trivial questions. On the contrary, they can make all the difference when you're talking about Connecticut HIPAA privacy laws and government involvement in the personal lives of its citizens. As such, the bill should address those topics with better clarity.

No one wants a child with a serious problem to go undiagnosed or untreated, but it is those children's parents, physicians, and others who are close to them that know them best, that refer them to those who can help. Please respect the right of public school and homeschooling parents to not have their children undergo possibly unnecessary psychological evaluations against their will. The cost is more than just dollars and cents; it is freedom. Please vote no on S.B. 374. Thank you.

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Regards,  
Justin Bair